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Letter dated 27 September 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I wish to inform you that a popular Conference on the native administrative system and its role in restoring tranquillity, security and peace in the states of Darfur met in the city of Al-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, during the period 18 to 19 September 2004.

Community leaders in Darfur, tribal chieftains, heads of political parties, civil leaders and representatives of Darfur in the National Assembly (the Federal Parliament) participated in the Conference.

At the close of its deliberations, the Conference issued a final communiqué, and an agreement on working towards resolving the Darfur crisis through dialogue among the people of Darfur within the context of one homeland (see annexes I and II). All the Conference participants signed the agreement and decided to transmit it to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the members of the Security Council and to the Government of the United States of America.

The agreement calls for the problems of Darfur to be resolved by its own people, and not making use of those problems in issues of international politics in a manner that may impair the image of Darfur.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Elfatih **Erwa**
Permanent Representative

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Annex I to the letter dated 27 September 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

National Assembly

Conference on the native administrative system and its role in restoring tranquillity, security and peace in the states of Darfur

Al-Fasher, 18-19 September 2004

Al-Fasher agreement

Almighty God has said: "O believers, be you securers of justice, witnesses for God, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents and kinsmen."

Praise be to God and blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of God.

We, the people of Darfur in its native organizations, its tribal chieftains, its religious and community leaders, the leaders of political parties and organizations and all its native decision makers, seal this agreement in proclamation of the following principles:

I. In compliance with the words of the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace), "Your blood, your properties and your honour are sacred to one another", we undertake not to commit aggression against one another's life, property or honour.

II. We shall endeavour to spread the spirit of reconciliation, and the renunciation of violence and not to harbour or support those who bear arms, whether they are rebels, armed robbers or mischief-makers, and shall participate effectively in supporting the efforts of the State aimed at collecting weapons from armed and outlaw groups.

III. We affirm that the Darfur crisis is an internal Sudanese crisis to be resolved through dialogue among the people of the Sudan. In this context, we strongly condemn attempts to internationalize the issue and to broaden the resolution thereof through references to military and foreign intervention, while at the same time, welcoming the role of the African Union to which the Government of the Sudan has consented.

IV. We undertake collectively to protect and safeguard the fabric of society from anything that may impair its unity, cohesion, solidarity and peaceful coexistence, and also to establish security and tranquillity and to provide and regularize desert tracks, farms, villages and encampments.

V. We all undertake to support the efforts of the State and to participate effectively in addressing the situation of the migrants and refugees and their voluntary return to, and rebuilding of, their homes.

VI. We place a high value on the role of the State in promulgating the Native Administration Act in Darfur and we undertake to make proper use of the Act and to participate earnestly in assuming the responsibilities set forth therein.

VII. We promise before God and his Messenger to refrain from the formation of blocs on an ethnic, racial or factional basis and to work to promote among us the primacy of the values of justice, the spirit of brotherhood, equality and human understanding, and we promise before God to fight against oppressors and aggressors, even if they are close relatives.

VIII. We call on those responsible for the affairs of State at the federal, provincial and local levels to respect this agreement and our attachment to the implementation of its provisions.

God is a witness to our words.

Chieftains, leaders and decision makers of the native
administration system in Darfur state.
5 Sha'ban A.H. 1425
19 September A.D. 2004

Annex II to the letter dated 27 September 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

National Assembly

Conference on the role of the native administrative system in bringing tranquillity and stability to the citizens of Darfur

18-19 September 2004

Al-Fasher

North Darfur

Final communiqué and recommendations

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

The Almighty has said:

"Those who believe, their hearts being at rest in God's remembrance — in God's remembrance are at rest the hearts of those who believe."

"O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing of you."

"O believers, fear God, and speak words hitting the mark, and he will set right your deeds for you and will forgive you your sins. Whosoever obeys God and His Messenger has won a mighty triumph."

"Help one another to piety and God fearing, do not help each other to sin and enmity. And fear God; surely God is terrible in retribution."

Almighty God has spoken the truth.

Praise belongs to God, the lord of all being. Blessings and peace be upon the most noble of Messengers, the Prophet Mohammad and on his kinsman and disciples.

At the generous initiative of the National Assembly and under the auspices of Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir, Speaker of the National Assembly, a Conference on the role of the native administrative system in bringing tranquillity and stability to the citizens of Darfur was approved and convened in coordination with the political secretariat of the National Congress in compliance with National Assembly resolution 12 of 2004 on the holding of the Conference to promote the spirit of solidarity, mutual assistance and peaceful coexistence and to implement the Native Administration Act.

The Conference is an extension of the efforts of the State to lay the foundations of peace throughout the country, to bring unity and eliminate discord and reach a settlement with the African brethren. The country is looking ahead to the prospects of peace, stability and reconciliation to create a sound foundation for the period following the restoration of peace in order to thwart the evil and insidious

plans of certain internal and external entities to stoke the fires of dissension in furtherance of their objectives.

The participants in the Conference included Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir, Speaker of the National Assembly and sponsor of the Conference, Mr. Osman Mohammed Yousif Kobur, Wali of North Darfur, General Suleiman Abdullah, Wali of West Darfur, Engineer Adam Idris Al-Salik, Deputy Wali of South Darfur, Mr. Suleiman Al-Safy, Minister of State at the Bureau of Federal Rule, chairman of the facilitation committee of the Conference, General Abdulkarim Abdullah, Minister of State at the Ministry of Civil Aviation and deputy chairman of the facilitation committee, Dr. Adam Al-Hajj Moussa Darousa, Chairman of the General Federation of Pastoralists of the Sudan and rapporteur of the facilitation committee, Professor Nasir Al-Sayyid, representative of the Popular Association for the Defence of the Faith and the Nation, the chairmen and members of the Association of Deputies for Darfur in the National Assembly and members of the Assembly of the government of North Darfur, native administrators of the states of Darfur and activists in the affairs of women, young people and students and in the organizations of civil society.

The Conference was honoured by the governmental delegation to the peace negotiations in Abuja led by Dr. Magzoub Al-Khalifa Ahmed, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, and political secretary to the National Congress.

The Conference heard the governors of the states of Darfur and the representative of the Association for the Defence of the Faith and the Nation. It was also addressed by Dr. Magzoub Al-Khalifa Ahmed, head of the governmental delegation to the negotiations and, at the end of the opening meeting of the Conference, by Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir, as well as by General Abdul-Rahman Mohammed Hussein, Minister of Internal Affairs and representative of the President of the Republic in Darfur.

The following working documents were reviewed by the Conference:

- document on the onset of the problem and the stages of its development, and the foreign factors involved;
- document on developmental achievements in Darfur during the recovery period and earlier;
- document on the peace conferences, previous endeavours and the extent of their effectiveness;
- document on the role of the native administration system in safeguarding and protecting the community;
- document on the draft of the new Native Administration Act.

The floor was then opened for wide-ranging exchanges and discussions. The recommendations made by the Conference come under three themes as follows:

(a) Security

1. Granting by the federal State to the component states of Darfur of encouragement, empowerment and support for the security institutions and the native administrative system.

2. Drawing up of a plan for the collection of weapons from all illegal armed groups.

3. Application of systematic laws and customs to relations between pastoralists and farmers.

(b) Native administrative system

1. Implementing the Native Administration Act within a maximum period of two weeks from the date of this Conference.

2. Providing the native administration of the Darfur states with the necessary facilities, as well as strengthening, training and improving its workforce.

3. Enabling peaceful coexistence based on mutual recognition of the rights and duties of all.

4. Adoption by the native administration of the programme for the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons to their villages; as well as reconstructing the villages, making them secure and compensating victims.

5. Maintaining the dialogue between members of the native administration and their armed kinsmen, and correcting the misperceptions that exist about Darfur nationally, regionally and internationally.

6. Sustaining liaison visits among the heads of the native administration.

7. Establishing the principle of accountability for negligence.

8. Involving women, as men's partners, in all efforts to resolve the Darfur problem.

9. Providing members of the native administration with training, education and instruction to enable them to carry out their roles.

10. Endeavouring to prohibit all words and deeds likely to inflame tribalism and racism.

All recommendations arising from the deliberations of the Conference concerning political and social issues, services, economic matters and the aspirations of the component states are to be referred to the collective conference of the Darfur states.

Finally, the Conference participants wish to commend the National Assembly on its initiative to sponsor this Conference, and wish to acknowledge the effort of all the federal entities in preparing and holding it.

As the Conference concludes its tasks, it wishes to convey its deep gratitude and appreciation to the federal Government, the National Assembly, the facilitation committee of the Conference, and the administration and citizens of North Darfur as well as all those who contributed to the preparation and organization of the Conference. We pray to God to keep our country free from strife — He is the best protector and supporter.

"O Lord, furnish our souls with faith and strengthen them, for You are the most capable of strengthening, our master and protector."

A statement and appeal from the heads of the native administrative system of the states of Darfur to the world:

Hands off Darfur

To: the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Copies to: the President and members of the Security Council and the General Assembly

the Government of the United States of America

We the undersigned, as sons of Darfur, leaders and tribal chieftains of the states of Darfur and its representatives meeting at Al-Fasher, transmit this urgent appeal to all the above and to all fraternal, friendly, and peace-loving States:

I. We have been following with great concern and considerable interest the attempts of some States and entities to use the question of Darfur, despite its local nature, as a political card in the realms of international politics and the internal politics of the United States of America. We have also followed, with great distress, the attempts to smear our people and Government by spreading accusations, fabrications, and allegations that are at variance with the facts in Darfur. These include the portrayal of the conflict in Darfur as an ethnic conflict between Africans and Arabs, together with distasteful talk of genocide. We have noted, with considerable sadness and great shock, the conflicting statements made by the United States Secretary of State and the Secretary-General concerning this matter; this sorry state of affairs reveals their intent and their lack of credibility. These unjust campaigns culminated in the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council by the United States and the constant hints of sanctions against the Sudan.

II. We do not know the source from which the United States derived its competence to speak and do business on our behalf and that of our people and tribes, nor do we know of anyone among our people who has sought its protection. The Government of the United States which destroys hundreds of lives every day in Iraq, and which is incapable of preventing hundreds of actual crimes of rape that are committed every day in its own territory, is not qualified morally or legally to defend the people of Darfur who never sought such protection, did not file any complaints on the matter and have not sought assistance or protection from anyone. We wish to affirm unequivocally that if the United Nations wishes to play a real humanitarian role and to aid those suffering injustice, then the place to do so is Palestine which suffers on a daily basis from genocide by Israel, or Iraq which suffers genocide and ethnic cleansing on a daily basis on the part of the United States administration. This is especially so since the Secretary-General of the United Nations has declared this war to be illegal. Why does he then remain silent concerning real crimes and rely on mendacious allegations concerning crimes in Darfur to justify foreign intervention? And why do the Secretary-General and the Security Council seek alleged crimes while turning a blind eye to real ones?

III. We resolutely affirm to the international community that we in Darfur are all Arabs and Africans at one and the same time, and that there are no ethnic divisions between us, nor are there wars on the basis of ethnicity; there are local conflicts that we are best able to resolve in an internal local context without

anyone's tutelage or impositions. We think that it is shameful of the United States to intervene in this internal matter in order to use it for electoral purposes.

IV. We reject, in any form whatever, the draft resolution submitted by the United States to the Security Council since it constitutes a request made by a party without authority to one that has no entitlement. We call upon the United States Government to lift its hand at once and to remove the question of Darfur from its political dossier and from the scope of the United States elections, and appeal to it to withdraw its draft resolution from the Security Council immediately since it only aggravates the suffering of the people of Darfur and prevents them from reaching a peaceful political settlement. We also call upon the United Nations and the Security Council to deny the United States the opportunity to proceed with its expansionist intentions. We call upon all the peace-loving nations of the world, including the people of the United States, to reject the spreading of lies and the exploitation of the Darfur question in the game of international politics.

This is the real voice of the people of Darfur being transmitted from Al-Fasher, powerful and united under the motto of "Hands off Darfur immediately".

Signed by the leaders, tribal chieftains and representatives of the Darfur states.

Al-Fasher, 18 September 2004